



Stakeholders:

We have been weathering what the Defense Secretary's Independent Review Group (IRG) reported to Congress last week as, "The Perfect Storm" here at WRAMC: the combined effects of a limited primary care capacity for our Warriors In Transition; the announcement of a Base Realignment and Closure recommendation to close Walter Reed that has disrupted our civilian workforce; an A-76 (workforce privatization) contract that interrupted repair and maintenance on the campus; unprecedented battlefield survival of wounded warriors--many of whom have arrived in WRAMC--along with other Soldiers injured or ill in the course of their service; changes in our efforts to fully recover and rehabilitate Soldiers on the WRAMC campus; and other factors. We have been proving we are up to the task of navigating uncharted waters. While conditions have been rapidly improving and the forecasts are brighter, challenges lie ahead. Thankfully, we have a crew of professionals willing to step outside their comfort zones and do what is needed. Our nation's finest sons and daughters deserve only our very best.

Accomplished last week

Warrior Transition Brigade: A total of 56 cadre completed the week-long Warrior Transition Brigade (WTB) Training Program starting with an orientation of Army Medical Department, the North Atlantic Regional Medical Command, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Garrison, and hospital departments. The program included a total of 55 briefings focused on educating the cadre on all the resources, systems, and procedures for providing care for our Warriors-in-Transition, including a detailed review of the Medical Evaluation Board and Physical Evaluation Board process. Finally, the training provided an in-depth study of the duties, responsibilities, and expectations of our critical command and control element - Platoon Sergeants and Squad Leaders. Upon completion of the training, the brigade staff and Able Troop cadre immediately began their Left Seat / Right Seat Rides with their counterparts in the Medical Center Brigade and the Medical Hold-Over Company.

The WTB Activation Ceremony will be conducted on Wednesday and our first company, Able Troop will stand-up on Friday with a team of cadre including six Platoon Sergeants, 13 Squad Leaders, and 12 Case Managers. WTB also made significant progress in the development of its clinical teams, which are built around Warriors and their Families. Specifically, physicians were identified who will be assigned as Primary Care Managers for the Warrior Clinic. We are making remarkable progress toward our goal of providing the best possible Warrior advocacy, continuity of care, and seamless transition through the Warrior support triad of Squad Leaders, Case Managers, and Primary Care Managers.

WRAMC Real Estate Actions Update:

Building 18 Repairs: The contract for roof repairs was awarded 15 March and the contractor began work on the roof April 6 and has made substantial progress. The penthouse roof has been replaced and 2/3rd of the existing roof has been removed and replaced. The current schedule for completion of roof repairs is 12 May. The Corps of Engineers (COE) continues to move ahead with scoping the interior and exterior "in kind" repairs until a decision is reached on the future of the building. We are very pleased with the full support provided by all elements of the Army for work needed on Bldg 18, should we elect to continue using it for administrative offices.



Furnishings Management: Tobyhanna Army Depot recently picked up a large number of barracks furniture and refrigerators sets from building 18; we are almost finished with emptying the building. The remaining furniture will be used elsewhere or sent to the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office as excess.



Delano Hall (Building 11): Recently, a COE team assessed HVAC and condensate issues in Delano Hall, a multi-purpose building in the southwest corner of the Walter Reed campus. The assessment was completed 19 March recommending upgrades to bathroom ventilation systems, upgrading heating and cooling systems to 4-pipe systems, and repairs to condensate leaks from the steam line. The contractor will provide the scope and cost estimates by 4 May 07.

Building T-2: The COE has been asked to renovate Building T-2 to provide administrative space for approximately 116 brigade members with approximately 12,000 square feet. During the 11 April tour, several options for the renovation were considered. We have asked the Corps team to provide cost estimates for the full range of options for the building's rehabilitation and use. The Corps' Project Delivery Team (PDT) has provided a scope that outlines these options as well as costs for procurement and associated site work for temporary trailers.

The COE has previously executed 34 leases for WRAMC, housing 62 Soldiers in our enlisted training classes. The necessary waiting period for additional leases for our soldiers has been completed so the Corps has moved forward in acquiring additional lease space for WRAMC. The current request for 35 additional furnished 2-bedroom apartment leases has been executed by the Corps and furniture installations were completed on Friday. With these leases, the Corps has executed a total of 69 furnished apartment leases for WRAMC, housing 132 of our enlisted training Soldiers.

Clothing Issue Point: A total of 269 Soldiers were sized between 13-16 April. All their items have been filled and delivered. Sizing will continue in Wagner Sports Center on 23 and 30 April 07, beginning at 7:30 a.m. and until all remaining Soldiers are sized. Sizing will resume in Bldg. 91 on 1 May 07, from 9 thru 11:30 a.m.

Infrastructure Progress: IAP's Garrison Headquarters Support Staff personnel will be working closely with the Garrison and other IAP personnel to collect and input data for the annual Installation Status Report I (Infrastructure). The information and data provides a snapshot of the condition and quality of the Walter Reed infrastructure and facilities. Data will be fed into the Installation Management Command (IMCOM) and Department of Army systems to provide focus for future infrastructure and funding needs. The completed, final document will be submitted by June 1, 2007.



IAP continues to respond to service calls for maintenance and repair requests at priority Soldier/Family quarters in its role as the Base Ops contractor. The team repaired HVAC systems, eliminated water leaks, and investigated and repaired hot water problems in various locations around the installation. To reduce inconvenience to WRAMC operations, IAP last weekend continued work on steam repairs to Building 1. This is part of a long-range vision of facility improvements aimed at addressing quality-of-life issues aimed at our soldiers and our resident civilian workforce. In addition, Garrison leadership, IAP personnel and the Baltimore Corps of Engineers (BCOE) have developed a close working relationship focused on correcting identified deficiencies throughout WRAMC. IAP typically concentrates on short-term, immediate repairs. The Garrison, with engineering support from IAP, tasks the BCOE with larger-scale projects such as renovations. The partnership allows for quick response as well as long-term solutions for continual improvement of the installation to better serve all members of Team Walter Reed.



The Roads and Grounds Team has been helping revitalize Walter Reed's landscape hit hard by winter's long hold on Washington D.C. For this week's Warrior Transition Brigade Activation Ceremony, the gazebo and trellis were painted in the Rose Garden next to Abrams Hall, our Warriors in Transition barracks. In the circle of the original hospital entrance (Building 1) stands the Hoff Memorial Fountain, built in 1935. A collection of brilliant tulips is in full bloom, bringing alive the spirit of Walter Reed and welcome warmth of the spring season. The NARMC Headquarters fountain in front of Building 1 has been a longstanding symbol of Walter Reed for many years.





Additionally: We have installed a new WRAMC Information Booth at the second floor, main hospital entrance. This desk unit provides an initial greeting center to assist patients or those visiting with questions or directions. We hosted visits from Assistant Secretary of Defense Gordon England, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff, ADM Giambastiani who was briefed on Traumatic Brain Injury, and Mr. David McIntyre, CEO and President of TRIWEST Healthcare Alliance, who brought a welcome group of actors and entertainers, including Gary Sinise ("Lieutenant Dan" from the movie "Forrest Gump"), Mykelti Williamson ("Bubba Blue" from the same movie), Karri

Turner (from the TV show, "JAG") and Michael McDonald ("MAD TV"). We have also made necessary accommodation for the President's Commission on the care for America's returning wounded warriors meeting and associated tours for tomorrow.

A second Eagle Cash card machine has been installed at the Mologne House. The Eagle Cash card works by allowing a Soldier to insert the card (equipped with a microchip) into a merchant terminal machine that reads the dollar amount available on the card. The card holder is able to receive cash stored on the card. WRAMC now has three senior NCOs who recently completed training to become Ombudsmen. Their primary role is to be advocates for Warriors in Transition; their secondary role is to facilitate actions from the 1-800 Wounded Warrior Hotline. They will be very visible throughout the facility; one will be at the new information booth at the hospital 2nd floor entrance.

Looking over our shoulder, yet preparing for the week ahead

Let's summarize some of the progress of the past seven weeks. We have created the core of the Warrior Transition Brigade that is activating this week. At its heart is its commander and command sergeant major, both combat veterans. They lead numerous Primary Care Management Teams consisting of a military nurse case manager, primary care manager and a squad leader/platoon sergeant. These teams are solely dedicated to assist our Warriors in Transition through the outpatient phase of their recovery. We have a new deputy commanding general who is proving to be a catalyst for improvements and long-needed change. We have established a one-stop Soldier and Family Assistance Center centrally located in the hospital. All the necessary services for Family assistance, finance and personnel actions are nested in this dynamic organization. We have also enhanced our Soldiers' accessibility to the hospital dining facility. We have eliminated the back log of awards and decorations. We have opened a Clothing Issue Point to issue new uniforms to our Warriors in Transition - hundreds have been served. We greet our Family members at the airports and escort them to Walter Reed. Not only have we centralized our outpatients billeting to the Walter Reed campus, we have furnished the rooms with plasma televisions with cable, computers, internet access and telephone service.

In the near future, we will be opening the Warrior Transition Brigade Primary Care Clinic; renovating building T-2 for our Medical Center Brigade leadership; and continue to strengthen the bridges between the departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, and the civilian medical system. With so many of these improvements already in place and those soon to follow, we will be able to weather future storms by delivering solid, revitalized healthcare our service members richly deserve.

Warrior Care!

ERIC SCHOOMAKER

Major General, MC
Commanding